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The Fierce Green Fire

A Newsletter of the Wofford College Environmental Studies Program

Dr. Brewitt's students walk along the boardwalk during their hike at Congaree National Park.



Volume 7, Issue 11

Congaree Hike by Dr. Peter Brewitt



Reeves Goettee, student in Dr. Brewitt's HUM101, stands in front of the root ball of a fallen tree in Congaree National Park.

Congaree, South Carolina's only national park, lies a few miles south of Columbia. You drive down I-26, through ordinary woodlands, without much sign that beyond the trees lies the last swamp wilderness in the Carolinas. Last weekend, I brought my Humanities 101 students there. We're studying children's books, and most of those books don't take place in houses or classrooms. They take place in the wild and tangled thickets of the world...places like Congaree.

Once upon a time, much of lowland South Carolina was bottomland forest, never quite dry and at times an impassable swamp, studded with enormous pines, oaks, and cypresses. Of course, when Europeans arrived, the swamps and their trees disappeared as fast as economy and technology could consume them. Eventually, a little patch

in South Carolina was the only intact forest of mature trees left in the ecosystem. Through some far-sighted protection, they remained standing. The area became a national monument, and then a national park.

We arrived amidst a storm of birdcalls. The main event was a naturalist-led hike, 4.5 miles and sometimes off trail, where we would find some trees that stand taller than any others of their species. When we got there we found that there were 98 (!!!) other people willing to go with us on this fairly strenuous and uncomfortable adventure. Nonetheless, we saw a lot of cool, wild spots, and some gigantic trees (a 168-foot loblolly!). I look forward to paddling Congaree some time this spring.



Students from Dr. Savage's ENVS 203 course visited the Calhoun Critical Zone Observatory, where their research team was excavating soil pits to analyze how human activities including farming and farm abandonment have changed the landscape. Dr. Ferguson is a participant in the research, focused on legacy sediments and magnetic signatures within the soils.

Upcoming Events and Opportunities

**These count toward your two required extracurricular events for the semester.*

November 24th
7:30am-9:00am

12th Annual Turkey Day 8k in Downtown Spartanburg: Partners for Active Living hosts this annual Thanksgiving Day race starting on Morgan Square. The race is free; just bring your canned goods with you to be donated to local charity. Pre-register online: www.go-greenevents.com/td8k2016 or sign up that morning starting at 7:00am.

Happy Thanksgiving!

December 15th

Application Deadline - Department of Energy (DOE) Scholars Program: The 10-week summer program offers opportunities that introduce students or post-graduates to the agency's mission and operations. Participants gain a competitive edge as they apply their education, talent and skills in a variety of scientific research settings within the DOE complex. Visit: <http://orise.ora.gov/doescholars/description/index.html>

March 1st

Application Deadline - Biosphere 2 Summer Program: The University of Arizona will hold a 10-week research experience for undergraduates (June 5-August 11, 2017) in environmental and Earth system sciences. Stipend, lodging, food allowance, and travel to/from Tucson, AZ provided for participants. For more information and how to apply visit: <http://biosphere2.org/education/research-experiences-for-undergraduates>. You can also ask Carol Morel about her experience there last summer.

Ongoing

Middlebury School of the Environment Summer Session 2017: Six-week summer environmental studies program in Vermont (June 23-August 4) with undergraduate credits for 3-full courses. Applications accepted on a rolling basis until the program is full. Need based financial aid is available. Visit <http://www.middlebury.edu/environment/about> for more information.

PROFILE OF THE WEEK:

Georgetown University – Masters of Professional Studies in Urban & Regional Planning

Georgetown University's Masters of Professional Studies in Urban & Regional Planning offers the opportunity for students to explore urban design on their state-of-the-art campus in an urban setting. Their brochure states:

The program engages the communities, places, and professionals to study urbanization as a global endeavor. Students gain unique, hands-on urban planning experience with Washington, D.C.'s extraordinary concentration of local, domestic, and international organizations, whose innovative activities span all facets of global urbanization.

With concentrations in urban design, community development, and international development, the program

encourages students to explore their personal interests in a mission-driven and opportunistic manner. Students learn from a faculty of leading academics and professionals who bring their insights, experience, and expertise directly into the classroom.

The program can be completed as a full-time student in 4 semesters (16 months) or as a part-time student over two to three years, allowing students to participate in concurrent full-time employment or professional internships.

<http://scs.georgetown.edu/departments/34/master-of-professional-studies-in-urban-and-regional-planning/>